

Comments opposing the deal between AT&T and Deutsche-Telecom (T-Mobile)

Dear FCC,

At the current time, I am opposed to AT&T's proposed deal to purchase T-Mobile. My opposition is motivated both by my personal experiences and what I believe the deal will do to consumer choice in the US cellular phone/data market.

AT&T has very poor customer service, poor phone and data pricing, and poor investment in its infrastructure, at least in my experiences throughout Southern California. Acquiring T-Mobile will solve nothing, and if anything, will make the first two issues worse. Even worse, it reduces perceivable and actual choice, and turns the United States cellular market into a near-monopoly with only two viable nationwide choices - AT&T or Verizon.

Some background. I was a happy Cingular customer for many years, and ever since AT&T took over Cingular, the customer service has gotten worse, the phone and data plans have become more expensive and restrictive, and phone/data reception has decreased considerably.

I have called AT&T and complained about these issues, and never have I received any resolution. Also, I have used their "Mark the Spot" application for iPhones repeatedly, some locations dozens of times, which notifies AT&T where their service is having an issue. After two years of trying to "help", I can see that my efforts as well as many of my colleagues have been wasted by AT&T's refusal or inability to improve its service in many metro areas in Southern California. It is especially frustrating to see that Verizon and T-Mobile appear to have plenty of signal in areas that AT&T does not. The reverse has never been demonstrated to me to be true, that is, I have never seen AT&T with plenty of signal and Verizon or T-Mobile with little or no signal.

If I had no phone today, I would certainly not choose AT&T. However since I am stuck in a 2-year commitment contract, without a way out except a very expensive early termination fee, my only hope is that my phone will last long enough to switch to Verizon's service.

Regardless of my personal experience with AT&T, I believe that AT&T's motivation in this matter is to remove choice, thereby raising prices and increasing profits. I also believe this deal will decrease service, as AT&T will no longer feel pressure from an aggressive nationwide competitor with better pricing, and will over time lag in infrastructure investment, again.

I think many of AT&T's stated benefits of the deal are already available to AT&T without the takeover. Mis-management, profiteering instead of investing in its infrastructure, or other issues within AT&T will not be resolved by making the company larger. If anything, this will result in many issues,

exacerbating some, especially for T-mobile customers as they are forced to live within AT&T's restrictive rules.

The only way I think the takeover will be a benefit to customers is if AT&T is forced to have much better pricing, public disclosure of complaints when there is a lack of service, divesting itself of other businesses, and reasonable compensation when AT&T's service is demonstrably poor.

Here are some conditions that might sway me to be open to AT&T taking over T-Mobile.

- If AT&T were held to some standard where customers would receive partial or full bill rebates, discounts, etc. when multiple customers complain about phone and/or data service in the same area over a certain time period, for example, 3 consecutive months. Using something as simple as AT&T's "Mark the Spot" application for smartphones, metrics can be used to gauge areas that need more infrastructure investment.
- If AT&T were required to publicly disclose customer complaints regarding a lack of service or similar phone/data outages.
- If AT&T were forced to offer more reasonable data plans, especially now that customers are using more data, and not less. In particular, their \$15/250MB plan is ridiculously priced, considering the small amount of data. The amount of data does not appear to increase over time, such as (2012 - 300MB/month, 2013 - 400MB/month, etc.) Nor is there any "rollover" even though that feature is available on their phone plans. Since smartphones are using more data, not less, this forces many customers to the higher plans or are charged ridiculous overage amounts when they exceed the limit. I view this as simple profiteering. First they charge customers once for the service, then they charge them again for an artificial "overage".
- If AT&T were forced to keep/reinstate their unlimited data plan for \$30/month, regardless of 3G/4G/5G/etc. technologies.
- If AT&T were forced to honor a customer's plan even if a customer wished to purchase a new phone and AT&T no longer offers that plan.
- If AT&T were forced to offer tethering for no additional charge, allowing the customer's data plan to cover the charges of any device connected to their service.
- If AT&T were not allowed to charge an early termination fee for some lengthy period of time such as 2-5 years after the purchase was finalized. This would allow customers to better ascertain whether service has improved, and if not, move to a different carrier.

I'm sure there are other ideas that are better than mine. These are just my personal perspectives

I hope that by filing this comment that pressure will be put onto AT&T to become a better company. I don't wish to embarrass the company or put it at a competitive disadvantage, but my attempts at seeking positive change through AT&T's internal methods have resulted in little or no perceivable change. I can't imagine the situation improving by AT&T buying T-Mobile, thus I request that if you

approve the deal, that you

- force AT&T to introduce multiple perceivable benefits, such as the ones I have stated, for their customers if they are to be allowed to consolidate the cellular phone and data markets, and
- force AT&T to divest itself of all non-cellular phone and data markets, such as U-Verse, and all business and home wired telephone/TV/etc. markets.

Or, please simply deny AT&T's attempt to monopolize the cellular phone and data markets.

Thank you for your consideration.